They aspired to a better life. That idea that we had to get out of here, we had to do better than this. This was okay for everyone else in the street but we could do better than this – Paul McCartney 1997

Mary became a domiciliary health visitor and midwife, and was on-call day or night, where she was needed as a midwife. Her eldest son, Paul, said his first memory was watching her cycling away when it was snowing heavily. – The Paul McCartney Project

He had us out aged about nine. I was virtually a door-to-door salesman [for Jim's gardening club] by the time I was twelve. For some reason I worked like a bastard when I was a kid! I would be out collecting jam jars door to door, doing Bob-a-Job. – Paul McCartney 1997

"Everybody was quite confident that Paul would pass the eleven-plus – for Mum and Dad thought of him as the brains of the family. And of course, he didn't let us down, because he was a natural at exams." – Mike McCartney 1965

After she had been diagnosed with cancer, Mary still carried on cycling to work, but often doubled up in pain and had trouble breathing. The day Mary was due to have a mastectomy operation, she cleaned the McCartney house and laid her two sons' school clothes out, ready for the next day." – The Paul McCartney Project

I think he was, uh, he was quite a clever lad actually. Quite good, you know, at languages and maths and stuff, he was quite bright. I think he was under an obligation, if you'd like, to his father Jim in a lot of ways to do well at school, because his mum passed away fairly quickly. So Jim wanted him to do well and I think he felt obligated to progress in school. – Len Garry

When Paul was in school, I was worried because I knew he was lazy. He had a good brain, but didn't use it properly. – Jim McCartney 1965

The words they used in their end-of-term reports: 'If he would only buckle down...' and you'd go, 'No! No! Get out of my life! I hate you. You should say I'm great. I've got to take this home, you know.' – Paul McCartney 1997

If I ever got bashed for being bad, I used to go into their bedroom when they were out and rip the lace curtains at the bottom, just a little bit, then I'd think, that's got them. – Paul McCartney 1968

The fact that Paul failed [to make the church choir] was not because he couldn't sing, realised Jim McCartney, it was because 'he deliberately cracked his voice in the audition'. – Mark Lewhison 2013

On one visit to Forthlin Road, Paul said, [he wished he could] 'pay our Mike to do my paper round and lie in bed and listen to Saturday Club'. – Ian James

Time after time, when I came home from school, I would find that Paul hadn't done his [chores]. I would go looking for him. And sometimes, I would find him. Up in his bedroom, perhaps, sitting in the dark, just strumming away on his guitar. Nothing, it seemed, mattered to him anymore. He seldom went out anywhere, even with girls. He didn't bother much with any of his friends. Except his schoolmate George Harrison and John Lennon, who was at the art school next door. Work, and work alone – his schoolbooks and his guitar – appeared to be the only thing that could help him to forget. – Mike McCartney

To turn up at home with a bunch of lads about whom he'd told Dad so much, and whom Jim was keen to meet, but who were now likely to arrive 'half cut' was Paul's worst nightmare. Paul was clearly anxious that his dad would smell the beer on our breath and frustrated that there was nothing he could do about it. John reassured him we would be alright, it was half a mile at least to number 20 and the walk in the fresh air would take away the smell of the pub and beer. Reassured, but not entirely convinced, Paul walked ahead of us while we followed." – Colin Hanton

If [mum] had lived, there would have been a hell of a lot of pressure at home for Paul and me to have respectable jobs, to go into the professions — to become lawyers, or Dr. McCartney, something like that. Dad, meanwhile, was a secret raver." – Mike McCartney 1992

I ruined Paul's life, you know. He could've gone to university and become a doctor or something like that. – John Lennon, 1970s

The education Jim McCartney offered his sons was not always conventional; [Paul & Mike] couldn't help but notice his inability to pass a slot machine without putting a coin in it, or the way he would quadruple measures of undiluted alcohol to guests. – Chris Salawicks, 1986

"[Jim would] teach us how to drink in pubs under age and give us the money to get a round in" – Mike McCartney, 1982

I never much liked authority. I didn't like school teachers or critics telling me what I should do. – Paul 2001

"He was very strict with Paul and Mike. He kept them in during the week, they were only allowed out at weekends." – Tony Bramwell

Andy [National Trust caretaker of Forthlin road] reported that if the boys were locked-out they would climb the back wall, getting in via the bathroom window; “they didn’t see a drainpipe, they saw a climbing frame” he explains with a smile.

When Paul later played at The Cavern during lunchtimes, Jim would drop off food there that Paul would later put in the oven at Forthlin Road. – The Paul McCartney Project

After you left home and before Linda, would you have cooked? “I lost my mother when I was 14, so there was my dad, my brother and me. My dad would drop into the Cavern where we were playing at lunchtime and he’d say, ‘Here’s tonight’s meal, son,’ and he’d leave me a few chops. I’d get home before him so I’d grill the chops and do mashed potato.” – Paul McCartney, 2013

I took Paul to a tailor that I knew on Mill Street, and he would take in the width of the leg bottoms to whatever you wanted, so we went at lunchtime or after school. Paul's dad said to him once, 'Where did you get those trousers from?' and Paul replied, quite truthfully, 'They are the same trousers that I went out in this morning.'" – Ian James

I remember coming home from school with Paul the day he told me they'd been invited to Hamburg. He let it out, just casually. I said, Wow! But Paul said he didn't know if he should, pretending he was all undecided. I said it was fantastic! He was going to be a big star, wow! He said, do you think Dad will let me? That was very smart. I was then on his side in persuading Dad. He let me get all excited, so that I was desperately wanting him to go.'" Mike McCartney 1968

Paul had every right to moan about Stuart. Stuart really wasn’t interested in the band, and he never practiced the guitar. Paul, at eighteen, was a perfectionist. He just wanted the band to be great, but there was this stuart bloke, just standing there looking good, looking very, very cool. And that was good enough for John, but it wasn’t good enough for Paul. – Astrid Kircher 1994

“Paul would always give in to his dad. His dad told him to get a job, he fucking dropped the group and started working on the fucking lorries, saying, "I need a steady career.” – John Lennon 1971

But what Paul had got was ambition. Who wants to settle down, when there’s a world to conquer? The only person he was ruthless with was himself. – Iris Caldwell, 1986.

If he wouldn’t join for a whipround the pub, or go off pulling birds all the time, maybe it was because he had other things to do instead; he had to get on with it . . . . Paul was

the whole driving force in the group, he was the clever one. And he was all right, Paul, he worked for everything he got. – Iris Caldwell, 1986

Back home in Liverpool, we used to sing over some of our songs to relatives—I did to my Dad and my aunties," he recalled. "My Dad would look at me looking disappointed." " 'I don't know young Paul,' he'd say. 'I try to get you to speak properly, and you drop your aitches. Why sing 'Yeah, Yeah' when you mean 'Yes, Yes?' "
"I tried to explain this was the whole point of the song," Paul continued. John broke in: "Anyone ever heard someone from Liverpool singing 'Yes'? It's YEAH."
Paul continued: "Well, we just laughed. My Dad gave us some of the worst advice ever. He said this music thing will never last. It's all right on the side, he'd say, BUT PAUL IT WILL NEVER LAST!"
"Remember," said George, "he always wanted us to sing 'Stairway to Paradise'?" – Ray Coleman article 1964

"And then you have the pleasure of ignoring him completely and going on and having a great success with it and proving him wrong."
– Paul McCartney 2012

"Quite simply, you need a manager. Would you like me to do it?" No one spoke for a moment or two and then John, in a low husky voice, blurted: "Yes."
The others nodded. Paul, gazing in that disturbingly wide-eyed way, asked, "Will it make much different to us? I mean it won't make any difference to the way we play." – Brian Epstein, 1964

"Paul wasn't that keen on Brian. He's more conservative the way he approaches things." – John Lennon, 1975

I'd always been the keeny, the one who was always eager, chatting up management and making announcements. Perhaps I was being bigheaded at first, or perhaps I was better at doing it than the others. Anyway it always seemed to be me." – Paul McCartney, 1968

"But when it came to signing John Lennon and Paul McCartney publishing, to be called Northern Songs, Paul was under twenty-one. Jim McCartney, his father, objected to him being published by a London publisher. He said to Brian, "Why can't he publish with a Liverpool publisher?" Brian said, "Well, for the simple reason that there aren't any. You know that. And there aren't any in Manchester, and there aren't any in Birmingham. The publishers are all in London." Jim dug his heels in and refused to sign. I remember John saying to Paul, "Come on, sign the bloody thing." Brian said, "No, no, not until he's

twenty-one. That's the way it's done." Paul asked, "Will you have patience? I'm twenty-one in June. And the day I'm twenty-one, I'll sign the contract."

Paul never grimaced in my presence. In fact, he 'cracked up' at some of my questions. He did, by his comportment, show an aversion to any sort of controversy. He treated Epstein with respect in public, but privately complained to John whenever he believed Epstein was too controlling. – Larry Kane

"I always had the impression that Brian used to worry about Paul, that he was a bit frightened of him perhaps because he was so strong-willed in his opinions about the exact details of how the Beatles' career should progress. Even though they could also be as thick as thieves about such matters, Brian was always circumspect when talking to Paul about things of any great importance. John and Brian always seemed to get on all right. But Paul would argue with Brian, and as far as I could see, Brian always gave in."
- Brian Sommerville

Paul] is very strong not to hear what he doesn't want to hear and when he doesn't want to hear, he closes up, sits on a chair, crosses his legs and pretends to read the newspaper with a deliberately impassive look. Paul is endowed with an immense talent, he hides a great inner tenderness and a formidable sensitivity under an angry outside. He has a beautiful smile and a formidable enthusiasm that he uses, not to be laughed at, but because he knows that these are assets that can make people around him happy. Moreover, and this is essential to me, he shows great loyalty to the Beatles and their organization. Therefore, I do not take into account his mood swings and hold him in high esteem. I would not want to lose his friendship under any circumstances." – Brian Epstein, 1964

"And someone suggested, 'Why don't you sell them, the Beatles?' Well, we were horrified because this was a personal relationship we had with Brian after all those years. We were horrified by the idea that he might sell us and I think he was horrified with the whole idea, actually.
Well, we dealt with it very quickly. Brian said, 'Robert Stigwood wants to buy you.' And we said, 'Oh yes?' He said, 'And we're having a meeting with him and one of his business people.' And we said, 'Oh yes, well we're not very keen on this, Brian. You know that, don't you?' So we waited till the meeting and they said, 'We were just talking about the conditions, you know.' And we said, 'Well, let's just get this straight. We're not going to be sold to anyone. If you can do it, you can continue to manage us. We love you. We're not going to be sold. In fact, if you do, if you somehow manage to pull this off, we can promise you one thing. We will record "God Save The Queen" for every

single record we make from now on and we'll sing it out of tune. That's a promise. So if this guy buys us that's what he's getting."
- Paul McCartney

"Maybe Paul had started to attach to Brian's upper-middle class ways. But they were getting along well. Like really well."- Nat Weiss

"You know one of the great things about being in the Beatles was at this kind of moment, George would probably, you know, look at everyone and go, 'what the fuck are we doing this for?' And I miss that. – Paul McCartney, 2018

It's hard to choose favourite memories of my time with George, there are so many but one that comes to mind was the time I brought the song 'Yesterday' to a recording session . . . George Martin said to me, "Paul I have an idea of putting a string quartet on the record". I said, "Oh no George, we are a rock and roll band and I don't think it's a good idea". With the gentle bedside manner of a great producer he said to me, "Let us try it and if it doesn't work we won't use it and we'll go with your solo version". I agreed to this and went round to his house the next day to work on the arrangement. – Paul McCartney, 2016

I'm sure I did piss people off at the time, much as I tried not to. It just seemed to me when we had a session booked it was a cool idea to turn up. Like Sgt. Pepper: George turned up for his number and a couple of other sessions but not for very much else. – Paul McCartney, 1986

Paul's the most talented insturmentally in that he could play very good guitar. He was probably the best guitar player in the group. Of course, he played bass guitar – he could tackle almost anything. He played very good drums too. His bass playing is wonderful. He was irritatingly good to other people. Sometimes he would put up the backs of the other guys cause he would get on the drums and tell Ringo what to do, and Ringo would get a bit irked by it. – George Martin

Paul used to sort of pop in [to the studio] any time he felt just walk round in his bare feet just any time day or night he felt like doing something. For John to do something he had to get a chauffeur to pick him up, take him in, do this and this . . . And he was a lazy bastard anyway. – Tony Bramwell

"You know you have to thank Paul for the amount of music we put out, cause he's the workaholic. John and I'd be sitting in the garden and the phone would ring and we'd say 'we know it's him. We just knew by the ring. He wants to go to work!" – Ringo Starr 2019

Throughout the meal, fans were ringing the doorbell. It was a time when Paul was between staff. Each time Jane answered them, speaking through the intercom. In the end, she made Paul go, even before he'd finished his meal. He gave a twisted smile, but went out and signed for all the girls who'd been waiting. – Hunter Davies 1968

There were big fallings out with the Beatles, but really, John was the only person who could say to Paul ‘That’s not good enough, we’ve got to get that better’ or ‘I don’t like that, it’s crap’, he could say that and Paul would listen to him. If I said that to Paul he’d take my head off [laughs], and quite rightly, you know, he’s got a great brain. – Eric Stewart, 2017

“We did eight years and look what we packed in . . . . Paul loved to work . . . So I've always thanked him for being that guy. Because otherwise we'd have put like three albums out and vanished.” Ringo Starr, 2024

Paul recalls once feeling guilty because he was exhausted from work, and having trained himself to never appear tired, apologized to [Linda]. She simply replied, “it’s allowed,” which amazed him. “I remember thinking, Fucking hell! That was a mind-blower. I’d never been with anyone who thought like that…it was patently clear that it was allowed to be tired.” The Paul McCartney Project

“So I think that really was good for me. She [taught me] not to be too up-tight. You know, in a situation like that. You lost your job. You can get up-tight very easily, you know . . . [I’d] be saying, ‘well I’d love to do so on so on, but I can’t’ and she’d say, ‘It’s allowed.’” All the weight just went off. ‘It’s allowed?!’ ‘Yeah! Course it is!’ So those kind of things really impressed me.” – Paul McCartney, 2026

P: I mean, it occurred quite a few times because I’m pretty ruthless, ambitious, all that stuff. No more than anyone trying to break into showbiz, but I can be pretty forceful. If we’ve gotta make a record, I’ll actually sit down and write songs. This could be interpreted as being overpowering and forceful.
Q: I’d heard that you were the driving force of The Beatles, but that John would be more interested in doing anything but what The Beatles were supposed to be doing.
P: Yeah, I remember doing Let It Be and we sat around the table in Apple and I came up with this idea that we should get it on film. I remember John said, ‘Why? What for?’ I explained a bit more. He said, ‘I get it. You want a job!’ Yeah, that’s it! But it seemed strange to me that he didn’t. He seemed quite happy languishing out in St George’s Hill in Weybridge.

I always wanted to make the group great, and even greater. When we made the Let It Be album, and it was a bit crummy, I insisted that we made Abbey Road because I knew what we were capable of. – Paul McCartney, 1986

I was beginning to be too definite, and George and Ringo turned around and said, ‘Look, piss off, we’re grown-ups and we can do it without you fine.’ People like me who don’t realise when they’re being very overbearing, it comes as a great surprise to be told. So I completely clammed up and backed off: right, ‘OK, they’re right, I’m a turd.’ So a day or so went by and the session started to flag a bit and so eventually Ringo turned round to me and said, ‘Come on… produce’, – Paul McCartney, 1986

“[Klein's] attempt at bullying Paul into submission [was] extremely unpleasant to witness.” – Glyn Johns

Suddenly I felt my usefulness had gone. I didn't have a job and I was worthless. I hid in Scotland for months. I let myself go. I grew a beard and started drinking heavily and sniffing heroin. I'd stay in bed all day, sometimes waking up at three pm and thinking: there's no point getting up now – Paul McCartney 1989

Klein has had Phil Spector remix Paul's song 'The Long and Winding Road,' adding a women's choir and some violins etc. Paul thinks this is shittiest thing anyone has ever done to him and that is saying something, but Klein laughs up his silk sleeve and releases 'Long and Winding Road' as a single anyway and still with Phil's new arrangement. Up there in Scotland, Paul McCartney, one of the four owners of Apple, the company formed to give total freedom, artistic control, to struggling performers and writers, wonders what went wrong, when even he can't control his own work." – Derek Taylor, 1973

Paul rang me up one day and said, ‘d’you know what's happened to let it be?’ ‘no.’ He said ‘they've taken it to America and they've given it to Phil Specter and he's been doing all the things that John said he wouldn't do and they've put heavenly choirs and all sorts of soupy strings on it. On my songs.’ He was furious. So was I. And I said [to Apple] ‘let's have a compromise. Why don't you say ‘produced by George Martin, overproduced by Phil Spector.’ – George Martin, 1993

I think we all would’ve loved the discipline and the expertise George has, but it was that he’d been associated with the Beatles and now the Beatles had broken up and we were very particular about that, we were trying to make this new career. I mean he really knows what he’s doing, and just to be getting back with someone as professional as that was a nice thing too. – Paul McCartney, 1974

Q: There was a lawsuit recently, the three others against Klein.
Paul: Of course I loved that. My God, I hope they win that one. That's great . . . . I kept saying, I can't sue the other three. But it actually turned out to be the only way to stop Klein, so I had to go and do it.
Turns out he is the type of man who wants to own it for himself and not the type of man who believes the artist should have it and do what he wants with it, which is what I believe.
Q: He was once quoted in New York magazine as saying he was going to roast your ass.
Paul: Yeah, well, he never did, you know, and that's cool. He wouldn't get near my ass to roast it, anyway. Punk.
[...]
Even a murderer has a great line in his own defense . . . . [Growing more emotional] My back was against the wall. I'm not proud of it. But it had to be done. To him, artists are money. To me, they're more than that.
Paul McCartney – 1974

"I used to have dreams in which Allen Klein was an evil dentist. That was a bad sign. I just wanted to be as far away from Apple as possible." – Paul McCartney, 2005

But the truth of the matter is that he was a total cunt. He said I was fine: 'Don't worry, McCartney loves me.' And I knew I was hating the bastard. He was a crook and I could see it – Paul McCartney, 2015

He used to call me the Reluctant Virgin. I said, 'Fuck off, I don't want to fucking marry you, that's all.' he's going, 'Oh, you know, he may, maybe he will, will he, won't he, that's a definite maybe.' It was really difficult. – Paul McCartney, 2003

We were kind of all in it together, and it wasn't really until Allen Klein came in that we got really divisive and started getting our own lawyers and stuff. 'Cos he divided us. It was basically him that divided us.' – Paul McCartney 1996

Dear Pig,

You have nothing to do with my affairs, so keep out of them!

Fuck off.

P.M. ❞

– Paul McCartney to Allen Klein, 1972

George called me and said, 'We're not re-signing with Klein,'" he recalled. "I asked him why, and he said, 'The only way the Beatles can get together again is if Allen isn't there. I'm ready to do it, so is Ringo, and I think we can persuade John to go along with it. But if we're going to work with Paul, we need to get rid of Klein.'" Allen Steckler

There comes a point where you suddenly think 'I'm grown up.' You know, cause a lot of the time you think. Just. Well I've got to listen to what everyone else tells me, and [it sometimes gets] a bit 'oh god what have I done wrong?' We reached it, when we went to Scotland, where suddenly we were grown up. I was now like a father. You were grown up, but you were free.' – Paul McCartney, 2025

My best work is backstage where he's bursting through the door after a show, lying down exhausted, sweating. Linda told me that he'd never let anyone photograph him like that. – Harry Benson

When I was a lot younger I used to think that um when I grew up if I ever got to be a parent then I would be a lot more understanding than my parents were. . . . I find myself being a lot like me parents were and I wish I was a lot more liberal. – Paul McCartney, 1980

Q: how long would you like to keep doing this?
A: forever

- 1984

Q: this is your old school… do you ever feel like someone's gonna come tell you off in a minute like "McCartney what are you doing here?"
A: hahaha! No. I'm the boss now.

Q: are you gonna do another album?
A: yeah. … You can't stop me. Ha!

- 2020

National Honors

United Kingdom: Beatles made Members of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for services to the crown – 1965

Chile: Order of Merit – 1993

United Kingdom: Paul McCartney knighted for services to music – 1996

United States: Kennedy Center Honors – 2010

United States: Paul McCartney becomes the first non-American to receive The Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song, the highest award a musician can receive in the United States – 2010

Peru: Grand Cross of the Order of the Sun, the highest award bestowed by the nation to commend notable civil and military merit – 2011

Peru: La Orden del Arbol de la Quina, an order given by the Ministry of Environment of Peru to those who strive for the protection of the environment.

Peru: Medal of Honor

France: Officer of the Legion of Honour for services to music

United Kingdom: Paul McCartney appointed to the Order of the Companions of Honour for his services to music – 2017

United Kingdom: Paul McCartney considered for a peerage – 2022

Brit Awards

Best British Group, The Beatles – 1977

Outstanding Contribution to Music, The Beatles – 1977

British Album of the Year, Sgt Peppers – 1977

Best British Single of the Year, Nominated, She Loves You – 1977

British Male Solo Artist – 1983

Sony Trophy Award for Technical Excellence – 1983

Outstanding Contribution to Music, The Beatles – 1983

Nominated for Best British Male Solo Artist – 1984
Nominated for Best British Male Solo Artist – 1985

Nominated for Best Soundtrack, Give my Regards to Broadstreet – 1985

Nominated for Best British Single, Ferry Cross the Mersey – 1990

Nominated for Best British Single, My Brave Face – 1990

Classical Album of the Year, Ecce Cor Meum – 2007

Outstanding Contribution to Music – 2008

Golden Globes

Nominated for Best Original Song, No More Lonely Nights – 1985

Nominated for Best Original Song, Vanila Sky – 2002

Nominated for Best Original Song, (I Wanna) Come Home – 2010

Grammy's

Academy Awards

Let it Be, Best Score – 1971

Live and Let Die Nominated for Best Original Song – 1974

Vanilla Sky – Nominated for Best Original Song – 2002

BMI Latin Awards

Dame Tu Mano Ven, Award-winning Song – 1997

Critics' Choice Movie Awards

Vanilla Sky, Best Song – 2001

(I Want to) Come Home nominated for best song – 2009

NME Awards

World Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1963

Best Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1963

Best British Disk of the Year, She Loves You – 1963

Outstanding Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1964

British Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1964

British Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1965

World Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1965

British Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1966

Best British Disk, Eleanor Rigby – 1966

World Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1968

British Vocal Group, The Beatles – 1968

Best British Disk, Hey Jude – 1968

Top British Group, The Beatles – 1970

Best British LP, Let It Be – 1970

Top British Group, The Beatles – 1971

Best British LP, Let it Be – 1971

Best Bass Guitarist – 1974

Best Bass Guitarist – 1976

Outstanding Services to Music – 1980
Best Band Ever, The Beatles – 2000

Best Event – 2005

The Songwriter's Songwriter – 2014

Music Video Production Awards

"Dance Tonight" wins best international video. "Ever Present Past" also nominated. – 2008

MTV Awards

The Beatles, Video Vanguard Award – 1984

Ultimate Legend Award – 2008

Emmy Awards

"Standing Stone" nominated for most Outstanding Classical Music – 1998

"McCartney in St Petersburg" nominated for outstanding variety music – 2006

"The Beatles: Get Back" won outstanding documentary – 2022

Q Awards

Merit Award – 1990

Best Compilation Album – 1996

Songwriter Award – 1997

Icon Award – 2007

Classic Album Award (Band on the Run) – 2010

National Academy of Video Game Reviewers Awards

“Hope for the Future” Nominated for Best Song

Gershwin Prize for Popular Song